

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
THE GOVERNING COUNCIL
REPORT NUMBER 57 OF
THE PLANNING AND BUDGET COMMITTEE

January 12, 2000

To the Academic Board,
University of Toronto.

Your Committee reports that it met on Wednesday, January 12, at 5:00 p.m. in the Council Chamber, Simcoe Hall, with the following members present:

Professor David Mock (In the Chair)
Professor Ronald Venter (Vice-Chair)
Professor J. Robert S. Prichard, President
Professor Adel Sedra,
Vice-President and Provost
Professor Derek McCammond,
Vice-Provost, Planning and Budget
Professor Carl Amrhein
Professor Avrum Gotlieb
Mr. Arvin Hariri
Mr. Elan Ohayon
Ms Jacqueline Orange
Professor Paul Perron
Ms Nancy Reid
Professor Fred Wilson

Non-Voting Assessors:

Professor Heather Munroe-Blum,
Vice-President, Research and
International Relations

Secretariat:

Ms Patti Seaman, Secretary
Ms Susan Girard

Regrets:

Mr. Brian Burchell
Dr. John Challis
Professor Raymond Cummins
Professor Ruth Gallop
Professor Susan Horton
Professor Bruce Kidd
Professor Michael Marrus
Ms Wendy Talfourd-Jones
Ms Judith Wilson
Mr. Vilko Zbogor

In Attendance:

Professor John Mayhall, Chair, Academic Board, Member of Governing Council
Mr. Louis Charpentier, Secretary of the Governing Council
Dr. Beata FitzPatrick, Assistant Provost

THE MEETING WAS HELD IN OPEN SESSION. ITEM 3 IS RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL.

1. Report of the Previous Meeting

Report Number 56 (December 14, 1999) was approved.

2. Business Arising from the Report of the Previous Meeting

The Chair postponed a discussion of business arising until the February meeting to facilitate the discussion of item 3.

3. *Growing Ontario's Innovation System: The Strategic Role of University Research: University Response*

The Chair reported that submissions to external agencies that established new academic policy positions would be approved by the Governing Council on the advice of the Planning and Budget Committee and the Academic Board.

The President thanked the Committee for holding a special meeting to discuss the report. The provincial government had commissioned Professor Munroe-Blum to produce the report. The University was expected to provide a public response by the end of February. The Council of Ontario Universities (COU) had applauded the government and was encouraged by the direction of the report. On receipt of feedback from the universities, the COU would formally respond to the government. At the University the report would require approval of the Governing Council on the advice of the Academic Board and its Committees. The President stated that the report was excellent and timely for Ontario and that the recommendations were consistent with the directions set out by the University of Toronto. He strongly endorsed the report. He was grateful to Professor Munroe-Blum for her service to the province and her work to advance excellence in education. He noted that the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs had discussed the report earlier in the day and that the resolution had been passed unanimously.

Professor Munroe-Blum gave a presentation, a paper copy of which is attached to Report Number 77 of the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs.

The Chair opened the floor for comments and debate. All of the members prefaced their comments with support for the report. Discussion focused on the following points.

A member noted that there had been no reference to colleges in the report; had that been intentional? Professor Munroe-Blum answered in the affirmative. The member asked for clarification of the imperative identified in the report not to undermine current research grant arrangements. Professor Munroe-Blum explained that Ontario universities had a range of historic relationships with federal and provincial governments. She cited the arrangement between the Ministry of Agriculture and the University of Guelph as an example. These relationships had a dramatic effect on research at the various institutions. In consultation with institutions, strong support for the principles of the report had been expressed, as long as implementing them would not undermine these historic arrangements. Therefore, the recommendations concerning distribution of funding by competition in the report would be directed specifically at new investments.

3. *Growing Ontario's Innovation System: The Strategic Role of University Research: University Response* (cont'd.)

A member asked how the magnitude of the allocations of government funds, such as the Ontario Research and Development Fund (ORDCF), would be determined.

Professor Munroe-Blum stated that she had originally conceived of a doubling of the amount currently spent but since this program had been slow to start, a doubling would be an insufficient amount for the ORDCF. Instead, she recommended that the funds be sustained at mature levels of spending. With regard to the Premier's Research Excellence Awards (PREA) she noted that this program had quickly reached its maximum spending level and recommended doubling the amount, with an additional increase beyond that.

A member expressed concerns about matching funds. Did the report intend to suggest that the University develop partnerships internationally for matching? Professor Munroe-Blum answered in the affirmative; international partnerships would be welcome. She further noted that the recommendations in the report cast doubt as to the traditional "benefit to Ontario" interpretations. International benchmarks for assessing research activity were recognized by government as being beneficial to its jurisdiction.

A member asked how the recommendations would benefit undergraduate students. He supported increased opportunities for undergraduate students to interact one on one with professors on their research. Professor Munroe-Blum agreed that it was vital to realize the full benefits of teaching and research synergies for all students, undergraduate as well as graduate. Academic planning could facilitate improvements. Faculty members were also in support of increased opportunities for student participation. She drew attention to the situation of students in the professional programs who, because of the heavy course requirements, had limited opportunity to participate in research. There was a need to address the issue on a divisional basis.

A member asked if the report would be distributed to the public. She suggested that the report could be used strategically to encourage individuals to support research through participating in matching programs. Professor Munroe-Blum said that there had been no discussion of distributing the report to the public at the individual level but that it was available on the web. The report recommended a broadening of the definition of partners. Currently the only formal matching partners came from industry. Individuals were currently eligible to participate through campaign opportunities. The report intentionally did not address institutional operating grants or fundraising. The member agreed that support for research could be an important priority of the University of Toronto Campaign. She asked how matching programs could be detrimental? Professor Munroe-Blum noted that matching programs should be used strategically. She was concerned that they could be interpreted as a window to displace governmental grant support. It was also very important that the universities received non-directed public funding support.

A member expressed the view that in the U.S. the government had the political will to provide sustained research support. If Canada did not exhibit the political will to support research, it would be very difficult to move forward on the recommendations of the report in an aggressive way. Professor Munroe-Blum agreed that that was the case in the U.S.; she cited defense and health expenditures as evidence. The 21st Century Chairs was the first program in which the government had provided the full cost of research including indirect costs. The recommendations in the report called for effective sustained support. She noted that Canada did not need to seek parity with the U.S. Canada needed effective support in the major pillars of support including full indirect cost recovery.

A member spoke in support of the federal government transfer funds to the province. The province was not bound to use the funds for the purposes for which the federal government

3. *Growing Ontario's Innovation System: The Strategic Role of University Research: University Response* (cont'd.)

had transferred them. Professor Munroe-Blum reminded members that transfer funds had been reduced dramatically in recent years. If the federal government was interested in targeting transfer payments then that would be a welcome initiative. The President responded by noting that there was an on-going debate within the federal and provincial governments as to which level of government should assume the responsibility for which costs. The provincial government would not accept federal matching grants that determined provincial spending priorities. Professor Munroe-Blum's report offered strategies that the province could implement to increase its competitiveness. To advance innovation and research, full research costs should be funded at the federal level with unconstrained transfer payments; however, the federal government would not participate in unrestrained transfer payments. The Premier's Research Excellence Awards offered a good solution to providing financing for research. Currently, the high expenses of the indirect costs of research were being displaced onto other areas, which could potentially include teaching. The current status quo on research funding was unacceptable. The recommendations in the report offered a positive strategy to address some of the pressing issues.

The member continued by noting that he considered the use of the word innovation to be ambiguous in the context of research and the report. He would have liked to have seen more focus on the humanities and the social sciences than was in the report. He would also have liked there to have been a stronger emphasis placed on the value of basic research, which was as vital as applied research. He noted that innovations in social work research could assist citizens in adjusting to changes in the economy and in society. He noted that knowledge of international languages and culture would be of major benefit in the global interchange. He was concerned that some of the broader issues such as these would be obscured under the term innovation. He noted that the recommendations in the report were first-rate. Professor Munroe-Blum thanked the member for making the case for the value of social work research, which she noted was vital in addressing such issues as urban development. She referred members to the case studies that accompanied the report for reference to the role of the humanities and social sciences.

With the concurrence of the Committee, the Chair extended the meeting to 6:10 p.m.

A member thanked Professor Munroe-Blum for the innovative thinking in the report. There was a powerful argument for linking humanities and the social sciences with the sciences. He suggested that this was the first time outside of Quebec that this issue had been addressed. Another member cited the chart that listed funding percentages by group; he asked in relation to that, what the perception of industry was to the report. Professor Munroe-Blum noted that industry had not seen the report, but that from the percentages as listed, industry was not investing at the level it should be. Research needed more investment from industry.

The Chair invited Professor John Mayhall, Chair of the Academic Board, to speak. Professor Mayhall praised the report. He brought to the attention of the members an error in Table 7. He noted that the report recommended the continuance of matching grants. He was concerned over the restrictions contained in matching grants and feared that they could siphon money from academic programs. The University was attracting new money through matching funds, but at what cost to the University? He was not of the opinion that the University should be a partner in matching funds. Grants should be matched from external agents. Professor Munroe-Blum concurred with the view that the system of matching grants could be problematic but she recognized that a broad definition of matching partners could be of benefit to the University. The decision to participate in matching grants should be made institution by institution.

3. Growing Ontario's Innovation System: The Strategic Role of University Research: University Response (cont'd.)

A member had concerns over whether matching programs were compatible with the way the University worked. He stated that the government should fully fund universities. He questioned whether funding levels were related to negative public opinion. The public did not experience a feeling of ownership in regard to universities. Current tuition fees limited accessibility. He suggested that ownership of intellectual property did not belong in the public domain. Professor Munroe-Blum stated that the primary product of the University was to provide an excellent quality of education; the secondary product was the use made of the knowledge gained.

On the recommendation of the President,

YOUR COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS

THAT whereas research and scholarship are central to both the mission of the University and the benefit and prosperity of the Province; and

Whereas the University applauds the articulation of a provincial policy framework for the support of research and scholarship; and

Whereas the University agrees that a policy framework premised on university autonomy, peer review, excellence and accountability together with appropriate funding is best suited to the dynamic world of knowledge and innovation; and

Whereas, within the context of the urgent need for improved operating funding, the University applauds the identification of the need for substantially increased resources for research;

Therefore:

The University of Toronto welcome the issuance of the report, *Growing Ontario's Innovation System: The Strategic Role of University Research* (1999), prepared for the Government of Ontario by Professor Heather Munroe-Blum, and strongly endorse the directions recommended therein.

The Chair noted that the motion was passed unanimously.

4. Date of Next Meeting - Tuesday, February 1, 2000 at 5:00 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

Secretary
January 17, 2000

Chair